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his parents have any property. If there is no son, then the eldest daughter inherits. She, in consultation with her parents, picks out a husband for herself. Such a husband is termed a "makpa." He is the property of his wife, and his younger brothers cannot claim to share her. The "makpa" has to live on his wife's property. When he marries, the daughter, the latter inherits the "khángchhen," while her parents take the "khángoo." A "makpa" is only one step removed from the "cavaliere serviente," can be turned out at a moment's notice, for no fault, and even the fact of his having children by the woman, does not debar the latter from her right to dismiss him summarily. It is usual for a woman to give a dismissed "makpa" a sheep or a few rupees. If there are no children in a house, then a son is adopted; for particulars in regard to this, see under the heading "adoption" and "husband."

753 EPILEPSY--za. Ladákis think that if the shadow of a rainbow falls on any person, he, or she, becomes epileptic, but see under "Rainbow".

779 [39]ETERNAL BLISS--deywa chhenmo. The ordinary Ladáki knows little or nothing about the state of "deywa chhenmo" which is apparently very similar to the European idea of "nirvána" or absorption into the Absolute Infinite. Buddhists have no God, according to our ideas, there is therefore no Being into whose Infinity they can be absorbed. They understand "deywa chhenmo" to mean a state of absolute rest and peace--free from all desires and pains, and to be attained only by the spirit of the pious at the conclusion of the period of its re-births or embodiments, in this world.

563 195 EUROPEAN--pheelingpa. This word means literally "people from beyond the ocean," it is, however, applied to all Europeans, whether they come from across the sea or not, e.g., Russians in Siberia would be termed pheelingpa. On the other hand a native of Ceylon would not be termed pheelingpa. The ordinary and more respectful word for a European is the Indian word "Sáhib."

6: Gazetteer G-5 (ca. 1840-1883) 1883-4 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

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423 Village Communities and Tenures.

has for long past been all used up, and the present holdings are therefore all of old standing. There are no Thákurs, in Spiti. The Gialpo or sovereign of Ladákh was the lord from whom in theory all held. The general rights of the State and the landholders in both waste and arable lands are the same as in the *Khálsa kothís* of Láhaul. There are 296 *jeolas* in Spiti, with an average area of about 5 acres. There are no *dang piri* or irrigated grass fields, as in Láhaul. All the men of the village graze and cut grass in common. A kind of thistle and wild gram or chick-pea are cut and stored for winter use.

425 Right of sale and mortgage.

No instance can be quoted of a landholder having sold the whole or a large part of his holding; but the custom of selling small portions is said to be ancient. The general idea seems to be that no one could question the validity of the sale of a whole holding, except the son or next heir. Two kinds of mortgage are in vogue. By one the land is made over to the mortgagee in lieu of interest till payment of the principal; in the other it is made over for a fixed term, on the calculation that the debt to the mortgagee will be liquidated in full within that time by the produce. The mortgagee ploughs, sows, and reaps, but the mortgagor manages the irrigation, and gets the straw for his trouble. Such a thing as an absolute gift of land appears to be unknown, and the general opinion seems to be that no man can give away land to the prejudice of his children, or that if he did do so, the gift ought to be treated as invalid unless they had grievously misbehaved. It seems the general opinion that in future a man ought to be allowed to give away his estate in the absence of any children or brothers or near kinsmen. Formerly the State would have interfered and put forward a claim. It is even now allowed that, in default of heirs or gift, the estate would lapse to the State; but our Government has hitherto not looked after its rights in this respect, and one or two instances have occurred of such estates being appropriated in late years by the landholders of the village and granted by them to some new man for a sum of money down, which they divided among themselves.

423 592 Distribution of fields comprised in an ordinary holding or household allotment in Spiti.

The great mass of the arable land consists of the holdings of the *talfás* or revenue-payers, which are each separate estates of the nature of household allotments. Within these estates the following occupants may be found:—Firstly, in each there is the *káng chimpá* (great house) or head of the family, who is primarily responsible for the revenue, the *beyár* or forced labour, and the share of common expenses demandable on the whole holding. He is the eldest son, for primogeniture prevails, but it does not follow that his father must be dead, for by custom of the country the father retires from the headship of the family when his eldest son is of full age and has taken unto himself a wife. There are cases in which father and son agree to live on together in one house, but they are very rare. On each estate there is a kind of dower house with a plot of land attached, to which the father in these cases retires. When installed there, he is called the *káng chungpá* (small houseman). The amount of land attached differs on different estates; where it is big, the *káng chungpá* pays a sum of cash, or cash and

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13: Heber and Heber D-3 (1914-25) 1926 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

At the end of two years the lad's head is shaved, all except a piece of hair, which is the rudiment of his pigtail, and which is now carefully preserved, dressed and well-greased with butter; this being an occasion, it is celebrated gastronomically and no doubt alcoholically.

We now come to the nuptial ceremonies, but it is quite unnecessary to wait for them till years of discretion have arrived, nor does Cupid have much to do with the wounding of Ladaki hearts, although even here there are occasions when the flight of his arrow is mortal. The women of Ladak enjoy a perennial leap-year, for in this country it is as becoming for a woman to be the aggressor in matters of marriage as it is for a man, and perhaps, in this respect, we are "the wrong way round" after all. When the lady is the active party, the husband brought to her house is called a *magpa*, but if she is taken as a bride to his house, she is called a *gnama*. The property belongs to the active partner, irrespective of sex.

Three methods of getting married are sanctioned by custom. The first has of necessity fallen into disuse since the Ladakis were conquered by the Dogras. It was the prerogative of any rajah or ruler, who wished to reward a man for services rendered, to grant him the power of choosing any girl he liked in the country as his bride. Thus a man of low degree could aspire to the hand of a great lady.

The second method is frankly to steal the chosen partner. The selection having been made, only relatives are admitted into the secret. No big wedding-feast is prepared, just a small one is made where the native beer or *chang* alone is unlimited. Grand wedding-garments are not permissible, and the actual ceremony is very simple, consisting merely in the bride and bridegroom each donning a very small white head-dress, called the *mgo ras*, while there are no religious rites. The *gnama* or *magpa*, as the case may be, has to say "*zhu-le*" to everybody, friend or no friend, hence the proverb: "The bridegroom or bride must say '*zhu*' even to the cat or dog."

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585 a marriage to be auspicious, it was essential that as many of the guests
273 as possible became intoxicated.

Mutton, rice and curry were distributed to all, and while the dancing went on, many laid themselves down to sleep. The lamas came up onto the roof and recited prayers for all. More *chang* was distributed by the girl, and everyone drank six cups at least. Each time that this took place or somebody got up to dance, the Garas would beat their drums to encourage revelry. Occasionally, they even rattled off tunes, which I was told meant "drink more". The lamas who were also drinking quite a lot, became very religious in this atmosphere, and kept on springing to their feet to bless the guests, the food, the crops and even the sheep belonging to the house, and which could be seen in the fields below.

585 Only the women would not join in the dance and needed much persuasion. Prem Chand, the Thakur's cousin, joined me in trying to get them to perform, and when eventually the older ladies of the house of Karpa (among them Tseten's mother) started a few steps, they all came along and joined in the fun. It was getting late now, and the sun was setting. The bridegrooms wandered about freely in the crowd during all this time, as did even the two younger ones who had not taken part in the ceremony.

As we broke up and went home that evening, we heard that the bride was down stairs in the reception room with the other women of the house. In twelve days, she would be going back to her parents' house, where she [591] would stay one month in accordance with Lahuli custom. She would only return to her new home after that time, bringing all her belongings with her and settling down for good in the house of her husbands.

We stayed another three weeks in Lahul, and during this time I had a number of opportunities to gather further data about the polyandrous [115] people of the Bhaga valley. The Wazir, Thakur Partap Chand, accompanied me everywhere, and for this reason, as well as because he spoke English, he was my principal source of information.

423 Thus, Partap Chand told me that in *Khalsa kothi* holdings of poly-
428 androus families, property may belong to the house, that is, to the broth-
595 ers who own the land jointly and without division, but fields are nevertheless divided up among them, so that each of them receives his own private revenue. Bad patches are distributed first among the brothers of a household, and then the good pieces of land. Women can also re- [584] ceive the revenue of fields put aside for them, and it is on this point that a bride's relatives have to be satisfied before they will agree to their daughter being "stolen" from them.

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could have married, and the parties are declared wed. This is the binding ritual which makes them husbands and wife. Unless it has been performed, the wife is not allowed into any private house or monastery in Ladak, just as unmarried girls are not permitted to worship at shrines, except at those of families in the houses.

A feast lasting three days is the next item on the programme. On the first day, the local villagers are fed, on the second the relatives and friends, and on the third the helpers and members of the bridegroom's *p'ha-spun*. Dancing round the *Drangyas* and the *Sha-kog* still standing in the yard, takes place on each of these days, and on the last one, it is broken up and distributed to the family and relatives, who accept the pieces as holy and of good omen. The Sha-kog, particularly, is taken to the bride's home, where it is sliced into pieces and given to her family to eat, the last morsel being given to her. Then the witnesses are paid off, each of them, in 1938, getting one rupee, and their helpers half that amount, while the lamas, who took part in the ceremony, receive a square piece of cloth each and some cash.

In the case of a *mag-pa* marriage, the same order of procedure is followed, except that the roles are reversed, so to speak, the man taking the part of the woman, and the woman that of the bridegroom. It is the *mag-pa* who is conducted in ceremony to the bride's house, and not the other way round. When signing the contract of marriage, it is the girl's parents who endorse the pledge that her future husband will enjoy the property which is hers with him.

3. *Division of property between parents and children*

When the eldest child of a Buddhist family in Ladak marries, the time has come for his or her parents to leave their home, to give up the house and the property belonging to it to their son of daughter, who has the right to enter immediately into possession of the greater part of his or her inheritance.

A small portion, sufficient for the support of the several fathers, the mother and unmarried younger sisters that there may be, is made over to them while the remaining, larger portion, is at once acquired by the eldest son or daughter as his or her exclusive property.

This custom, which forces parents of grown-up, married children to retire from active life and from the responsibilities of their household when they are still not much beyond middle age, is called ***K'hang chen K'hang gu cho ches*** (***K'hang ch'hen K'hang bu Pyo Ches***), or translated literally, "Big house, small house to make".

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The parents and the unmarried sisters go to live in the *k'hang-gu* or small house (which may be either a small part of the large house, or a separate one on the family land, or even lodgings in some one else's house if a *k'hang-gu* cannot be afforded by the family), while the eldest son or daughter takes over the major portion of the household which is called the *K'hang-chen*.

The reason for doing things in this way is, I was told by Joseph Gergan on the 6th October 1938, that bride and mother-in-law unless separated, are sure to quarrel. A Tibetan proverb says:

P'ha gNyen-bo sGo rGyap-la
Ma gNyen-bo Gog sBugs-la

which means:

"The father's relations are behind the door
The mother's relations are right inside the hearth."

Or, in other words, that the relations of the husband(s) should be turned out, while the wife's relations can always be sure of a warm welcome in in the home – that is in a *bag-ma* household; in a *mag-pa* one this naturally does not apply.

Reasons for the existence of this special custom, valid for both *bag-ma* and *mag-pa* marriage, have been given as the fact that the parents are getting old (after fifty, Ladakis, like Tibetans, age very quickly), and that, for this reason, they can no longer assume responsibility for the cultivation of the land, nor continue to bear the burden of the recurring festivals, etc. So they go into the *k'hang-gu* where they have no obligations any more, and leave their newly wedded children to shoulder the charges which go with possession of the *k'hang-chen*.

The *k'hang-gu* consists of a smaller house, standing generally on the land of the *k'hang-chen*, and of the fields called *To-zhing* (*lTo-zhing*), "food-field", necessary for the maintenance of the persons who live in it. No charges or dues are collected from the *k'hang-gu* by the Kashmir State, and those who live in it do so absolutely freely. The portion of the father or fathers is called *p'ha-skal* (*P'ha-skal*), and that of the mother *ma-skal* (*Ma-skal*), for such division between parents is observed. Unmarried sisters live on the *p'ha-skal*.

The fields of the *k'hang-gu* can be cultivated by the inhabitants of the *k'hang-chen*; this saves trouble for the old folk. But if no such labour is forthcoming, then the *ma-skal* will be cultivated by the relatives of the mother, while the fathers and the unmarried sisters will look after the *p'ha'skal*.

Apart from land to be tilled, there are some animals in the *k'hang-gu*

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595 425 428 688 such as cattle, sheep and goats in small quantities. Its dwellers also have household utensils and movable property such as furniture. These things, the size of the house, and the amount of fields and animals, vary from household to household, but are fixed quantities within each one individually; they do not change but remain the same for every succeeding generation.

595 425 428 [851] The elder son or daughter who has acquired ownership of the *k'hang-chen* takes over full proprietorship, which includes not only the rights that go with it, but also the obligations. Thus, an elder son has to look after his younger brothers, maintain them whatever their behaviour, be it good or bad (he may never disinherit them), share his wife with them and look upon the children born to him as just as much theirs as his own. Younger brothers are at liberty to leave and contract marriages elsewhere if they so wish; in actual fact, they often do become *mag-pas* of heiresses, in which case they forfeit their rights to property in the [192] *k'hang-chen* of their elder brother. Sometimes, they become lamas and join some monastery, in which case they are entitled to retain their share or give it up, as they please.

595 796 The owner of the *k'hang-chen* must see to it that the monthly *lha-bsang* (*lHa-bSang* (*aBras*)) or "god meal (of rice)" ceremony is performed. This takes place on the 10th of each month – and sometimes on the 8th too. Occasionally, a neighbour will help by holding the rite in his house for both households, and vice-versa. The New Year Tibetan festival must also be observed, as well as those agricultural feasts which occur at sowing time in February and March (*sa-kag*, *ma-zhing*) and at the harvest in October (*sGrub-lha*).

595 651 An obligation exists also to white-wash *chötens* and *mani*-walls regularly, and for some, to do the same to the walls of the castle at Leh. Death rites must be carried out, tax paid to the Kashmir government (which holds only the owner of the *k'hang-chen* responsible for this) as well as various dues and *ulag* or *begar* (forced, unpaid labour) acquitted to those to whom it is owed (government, monasteries). Divorced sisters who return home must be looked after (they have the right to live in the *k'hang-chen* and do not go to the *k'hang-gu*), and younger sons who go to Lhasa for studies and employment must have their expenses paid by the head of the family.

595 591 888 My informant, Nono Tse P'hün, told me that he had seen households in which not only the parents lived in a *k'hang-gu*, but also grandparents and even great-grandparents. In Likir, there was in 1953 a great-grandfather who had outlived everyone in the various *k'hang-gus* on

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the property, and, because he had remained all alone, had requested to be allowed to return to the *k'hang-chen*. He was given permission to do so by his great-grandson.

Parents are not really bound by custom to move into the *k'hang-gu* as described above. They can go on living in the *k'hang-chen* if they so decide, and their children (and the wife) agree to it. A family in which parents and married offspring thus live together is called *k'hang-shi zang-po* (*K'hang-gShis bZang-po*). I understand that an increasing amount of households are giving up the old custom of *k'hang-chen k'hang-gu cho ches*, because, as my informants told me, "nobody wants it any more".

At the death of the occupiers of the *k'hang-gu*, it reverts to the *k'hang-chen*; should the mother die first, the *ma-skal* will revert immediately, while the *p'ha-skal* will only become part of the main portion of the family property when it is not occupied any longer by either fathers or unmarried sisters. The *k'hang-gu* of a grandparent or of a great-grandparent reverts to the *k'hang-chen* at the demise of its occupier, and not to the *k'hang-gu* in which the parents and sisters are living, as might be expected. Unmarried sisters can leave to be wed in *bag-ma*, in which case their occupation ceases and the *k'hang-gu* is re-absorbed by the *k'hang-chen*.

4. *Divorce and marital irregularities*

Divorce in Ladak is called *Chad-dral* (*bChad-aBral*) or "cut separate". There is rarely a ceremony connected with it, and formalities are reduced to the minimum. Usually, repudiation of one of the parties by the other takes place orally, simply in the presence of witnesses. It is possible, however, to have a written deed made out, which contains the declaration of divorce, the evidence gathered to justify it, and a record of how the dowry of the woman was paid back to the family. The ceremony which sometimes takes place is called *Lso-pang* (*lSo-sPang*) or "dung reject", and occurs when a husband or husbands wish to divorce their *bag-ma* wife. After the latter has been repudiated in either of the ways described above, the men's *p'ha-spuns* are feasted with *chang*. Salt, onions, grain and the remains of the fermented grain with which the *chang* was made, are thrown into the fire and the ashes cast away. Sometimes, instead of these things being burnt, sheep and goat droppings will be collected and symbolically cast away.

If a woman wishes to divorce her husband – an heiress her *mag-pa*, or a widow her deceased husband's younger brothers, with whom she

[See discussion in category 116, pp 352-355--Ed.]

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114 6. *Personal field-work research*

595 After having gathered a certain amount of theoretical information of the kind which I have given above, I felt the necessity to go out and see things for myself. I asked Nono Tse-p'hün to take me to some of the polyandrous households which he knew in the neighbourhood of Leh, and he accepted readily enough.

(i) *Visits to polyandrous households*

595 601 Consequently, on the 30th of August 1938, we visited a family living in polyandry in the immediate outskirts of the town. The name of the house was *Tok-Tok* (possibly *Grogs-Grogs* or *T'hog-T'hog*) and consisted of two brothers living polyandrously, and of two of their sons by a first wife also living in this way. I give the genealogy which I made then, in Table 27, by way of illustration.

789 As we approached the Tok-Tok house I noticed a *Dö* (*mDos*) string cross over the door to catch devils. I remarked upon it and heard that in Ladak it is called a *namgo* (*rNam-mGo?*). The building was a typical 342 [353] Tibetan one, with a flat roof covered with fuel for the winter arranged in packets round the edge, thick stone walls painted white, rectangular doors and windows, the lower part of the frame broader than the upper part, with coloured decorations and a piece of cloth hanging over the top part, a *lha-k'hang* (*lHa-K'hang*) or private chapel on the first floor with *chötens* visible through the window. We entered by the front gate which led into a yard and thence into a stable, from which a staircase took us up to the first floor. It was there that we met the family, and 115 had our talk with our principal informant, the eldest father and former master of the household, Lobsang Tok-Tok.

595 428 He told us that he and his brother, Ishe Döndrup, together with their eldest sister, Skalzang Rolma, were the three children of a certain Ishe Tok-Tok now dead. The sister had been married off in *bag-ma* to the now deceased son of the Par-k'hang house (meaning "Printing House"), Samten, with whom she had had no children. She had inherited the [597] property at his death, and would be holding it as long as she lived, or until the little girl she had adopted married and set herself up in the *k'hang-chen* as the heiress. This little girl belonged to the *p'ha-spun* of Skalzang Rolma's former husband and, for this reason, was entitled to inherit the Par-k'hang house.

591 595 888 Lobsang himself, a man in his sixties now, had been married polyandrously with his brother to a certain Tsering Panzom with whom they had had two children, a son called Stobgyal and a girl, Ishe Palkid.

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The latter had been married off very early to Sonam of the Takpa household, in *bag-ma*, and Stobgyal had taken Tsering Yangdzen as his wife. He had then moved into the main part of the Tok-Tok house, and the two fathers had taken up their quarters in two small rooms on the second floor. Stobgyal had had two sons with his first wife, Tsering Murup and Tsering Norpel, and these two boys had also married polyandrously to become the rightful occupants of the *k'hang-chen*. They, their wife Chungnid and their two small children, Pandzom and Dok-pa, lived on the first floor, while Stobgyal remained in his quarters, provisionally. It appeared that he had not yet moved into a *k'hang-gu* as he should have done, because he had remarried after having become a widower, and had had five children by his second wife, Lha-dzom.

With so many people about the house, I found conditions a bit strenuous. The kitchen held a certain number of the children, and Lha-dzom was in there cooking. I went in to see her, but was soon driven out by the smoke, which had no chimney by which to escape, and filled the room down to about knee level. I did remain there for a short time to look round, with my head bent down to that height to keep my eyes from watering, but I soon gave it up and retreated to rejoin old Lobsang. We went out to take a photograph in which he, his brother, their son, Chungnid, and Sonam Döndrup, Lha-dzom's second son, agreed to pose, the two last ones with Dok-pa and Gon-po in their arms (see Fig. 37).

Then we went in again, and sat down on carpets in the largest room on the first floor, which happened to be the one in which the *lha-k'hang* was, and had a cup of tea while we continued to discuss their family affairs. I enquired about their fields and the cultivation, the trade and their travels, and heard how their polyandry was regulated. It is from such information from these people and from others that I was able to get a clear picture of the conditions in which polyandry flourished in Ladak.

Lobsang Tok-Tok complained bitterly of the "immorality" of young people in Leh. He said that polyandry was no longer desired by the younger generation, and that this was all due to outside influence from Indian and Turki traders from Sinkiang, and from European missionaries and travellers who were perpetually speaking against the time-honoured custom of polyandrous matrimony such as Ladakis and Tibetans had always practised, and were introducing the "bad habit" of monogamous marriage.

He asked me how it was that we were so wealthy in Europe without

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595 123 182 a livelihood – like the Moslem Ladakis who went to Burma. I was, I confess, considerably impressed by the old man's perspicacity. It was also a lesson to me, and showed me better than anything else what circumstances were like in this area of Tibetan culture, and how polyandry was connected, or appeared to be, with the economic necessities of the environment.

595 601 That same afternoon, we went on to visit another polyandrous family living in a neighbouring house. Here, an elderly father, remarried to a new wife after his first wife had died, lived in a *k'hang-gu* situated on the family grounds, very close to the ancestral house, the *k'hang-chen*. In the latter, his son by the deceased wife, now lived with his wife and [115] five of six children that the couple had had. This son was our informant, and [888] apart from the polyandry in which the sons lived, I was [591] interested to see how grandparents and parents resided separately. Their genealogy is to be found in Table 28.

591 595 888 Lobsang Namgyal's eldest daughter was married off in *bag-ma* to the eldest son of the Tsana household. His three sons were still very young (the eldest only just eighteen) but were already married polyandrously to Skalzang Deskid. She had no children yet, and I was told that they were waiting for her to have her first baby to put Lobsang Namgyal and his wife, Tsering Rolma, into a second *k'hang-gu*. This is sometimes done in Ladak, instead of taking over from the parents directly after the wedding; it is as if the newly-married had no reason yet to become the official owners of the family property. The two younger daughters, still very small, would move into the new *k'hang-gu* with their parents, I was told, and would remain there until they were married out in *bag-ma*. Asked where the "small house" was into which father and mother would eventually move, I was informed that they would take the place of Tsang Dön-drup and his wife, Tsang Rolma. These two would then go to another *k'hang-gu* situated on another piece of ancestral land, and in which grandparents always resided in the Tsang-bi family. It was quite apparent that the different portions reserved for retiring elders were always the same, awaiting new occupants which the inexorable march of time brought to them.

595 601 888 591 On the following day, August 31st 1938, Nono Tse-P'hün took me to more polyandrous households of Leh. First, we visited a family called *Od-ldan* (*aOd-lDan*) in which an heiress had married in *mag-pa*, and lived in the *k'hang-gu* while her three boys, living in polyandry, occupied the *k'hang-chen*. Their genealogy as I made it that day, is given in Table 29.

[i.e., Lobsang Namgyal -- Analyst]

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Sonam, the eldest son of the heiress living in the little house on the family property with her *mag-pa*, was our informant. He told us that his mother and father had moved from the big house, in which he lived, some ten years ago. With them, went the youngest sister, then still unmarried, Chorol. The two eldest sisters, Putit and Yangdzen, were already married out in *bag-ma* at the time. The eldest, Putit, was married in polyandry in the Goba household, and I asked Nono Tse-P'hün to take us on to that family next, which he did.

As soon as Sonam and his two brothers, Rabgye and P'huntzok Stobldan, had married Tsewang Putit, they had taken the *k'hang-chen* over. Very soon afterwards, Sonam Dorje, their eldest child and only son, now aged eight, was born, and subsequently they had had three daughters, now aged six, five and two respectively.

Chorol had only recently been married off in *bag-ma* to Tashi Murup of the Raku household; that was the reason for which she did not yet have any children.

P'hüntzok Stobldan, so Nono Tse-P'hün told me later, although the youngest husband of the common wife, whom he shared with his brothers, was not happy in polyandry. He wanted very much to leave and become the *mag-pa* husband of an heiress: the daughter of one Gyurmed (*aGyur-med*), the head of a household which I have marked down in my notes as being called *Tiapa*. This must be a mistake, however, as the sound *Tia* does not exist in Tibetan (it may perhaps be *Tra-pa*).

Tsewang Putit was standing outside the house, near the entrance gate to the compound, during the conversation which we had with her eldest husband just inside the main room. We went out again to take a group photograph of the family (see Fig. 38), and when I had done this, I turned and spoke to her through the interpreter. She was holding her youngest child, the little girl, Sonam Putit, in her arms, and I asked if she could tell me who its father was.

She looked surprised and looked away. I insisted, but she shook her head, and Nono Tse P'hün said that she could not tell. I then suggested that she could surely calculate backwards as to who the father was, and find out who was with her at the probable time of conception. This was put to her, but she still refused to say. Finally, after the interpreter had teased her somewhat, and the husbands had laughed her into talking, she said that she was an honest woman, and did not have any preference. This seemed to satisfy Sonam and the others very much, for they shook their heads approvingly and looked at Nono Tse P'hün as he translated to me. It was obvious that Tsewang Putit had said the

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right thing. It was very characteristic of the morality of polyandrous people in Ladak. I noticed, furthermore, in the Od-ldan household, that all fathers of the polyandrous family, Sonom, Rabgye and P'huntzok Stobldan, were called *ap'ha* (*A-p'ha*) "father" by their children, without there being made any distinction between elder, middle, or little father, as was more usual elsewhere.

That afternoon, we went on to visit the *Goba* (*mGo-pa*) household close by. Here too, we found the parents in the *k'hang-gu* and the married children living in polyandry, with their own children, in the *k'hang-chen*. Putit of Od-ldan, who was the lady of the house here, received us and acted as informant. I made the genealogy of the family which I give here, in Table 30.

Two brothers, Lobsang and Ishe Dön-drup, were married polyandrously to Tashi Dzom-pa, whose household name I do not know. They had seven children and when the eldest boy, Tashi, got married, together with his two brothers, Padma and Sonam Tashi, to Putit of the Od-ldan household, they immediately left the *k'hang-chen* to them and went and lived in the *k'hang-gu*. They were there now, but we were unable to see them, as they had gone to Leh for the day. Lobsang was now dead, and Ishe Dön-drup lived alone with Tashi Dzompa. Their field was cultivated for them by their children of the *k'hang-chen*, so that the old people had a peaceful time.

They had always been alone in the *k'hang-gu*, as they had never had any unmarried daughters to stay with them. Ku-skid and Tsering Palkid were married off in *bag-ma* very early, so early in the case of the last daughter, that the informant could not give us the name of her husband.

The second son of the household, Stanzin, had not accepted Putit as a common wife, and had preferred to leave and go as a *mag-pa* to the heiress of a neighbouring house, Tsering Rolma of P'ho-la. It was difficult to get details from Putit about this and we did not press her, feeling that her reticence was natural. There was another *mag-pa* in the family, Dön-drup Sonam, who was married to Yangskid, heiress of the household which my notes have as Jigsten-pa.

Putit herself had had five children with her three husbands, one boy and four girls, all of whom called their fathers *ap'ha* (*A-p'ha*), indiscriminately, as in the previous case.

On the 1st September 1938, I went to yet another polyandrous household of Leh, called *Mahe* (*Ma-he*). It, too, was in the outskirts of the town and Nono Tse-P'hün and I found it at the end of a long passage between two walls delimitating fields, as is often the custom in Ladak.

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There was an entrance gate, a yard with a stable, a first floor with a *lha-k'hang*, as is usual. In this house which constituted the *k'hang-chen*, we found a family of two men, their common wife and three boys, as well as a divorced sister of the brothers. At the end of the field, attaining to the house, was a smaller building, with a field of its own. This was the *k'hang-gu*, and in it were the parents of the men. These parents consisted of a decrepit old hag and her three old husbands, and they had been living there for some six years already. The eldest of the men in the *k'hang-chen*, named Sonam Tsewang, acted as the informant, and it was with him that I made the genealogical tree of the family as shown here in Table 31.

The eldest sister of the fathers in the *k'hang-gu* was dead, it seemed. She had been married off in *bag-ma* to two brothers of a household called Chubipa, and she had had sons to continue the line there. The three brothers had married one woman called Sonam Putit – the old hag who was living with the men -- and these people had had five children, three daughters and two boys.

The eldest daughter, Tsewang Palmo, had fallen in love and married a Christian called Dorge, much to her family's displeasure, not so much because of the difference in religion, but because, being a convert of the mission, he had no land of his own (he had been excluded by his own family) and had to work as a peon. The second daughter, Standzin Rolma, had married into a household called Kushu but had since divorced and had returned to her brothers. She now lived in the *k'hang-chen* as is the custom, and her brothers had to see to it that she was maintained. I was not able to find out under what circumstances she divorced.

The two boys, Sonam Tsewang and Skalzang, were married polyandrously with a woman named Ishe Rolma. They had three boys with her, and the continuity of the Mahe household through males was thus assured. A sister, born between the birthdays of the two men, called Chungnid, was the one we had met at the Tok-Tok household on the 30th of August. She was married polyandrously in *bag-ma* there to the two sons of Stobgye, Tsering Murup and Tsering Norpel.

We spent the afternoon of the same day at the house of an *amchi* or native Tibetan doctor, the *Gadpo-pa* (*rGad-po-pa*) Household. There was only a grandmother alive in this house, and she lived in the *k'hang-gu* reserved for her. The son, Chonde, who was a doctor, lived in a larger *k'hang-gu* than usual, because, as an *amchi*, he had private means and could add to the small home as he wanted. Actually, the

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595 form which I gave it then. I have since learned Tibetan, and I had the
114 good fortune to be able to review it with my Ladaki informant, Nono Tse-P'hün, in Kalimpong, on the 3rd December 1953, so that I have made many corrections in the spelling, and have given what now appears to be the correct orthography of the names.

595 The Bata household was situated quite close to Leh, in the immediate
601 vicinity, like the first families which we visited: It consisted of four people, one elderly man called Döndrup, his son Murup, the latter's
[115] wife Palkid, and her *porjag* whose name was Paljor; he was the youngest of the Shing-k'hang-pa household which we had examined earlier, and the genealogy of which is given in Table 33. All these people acted as informants, Nono Tse-P'hün gathering information for me not from only one of them but rather from them all together as they stood outside their house and talked with us. They all lived in the Bata *k'hang-*
[591] *chen*, there being no reason, as we shall see, for Döndrup, the elder, to go to a *k'hang-gu*. The house was of the usual type, standing close
[126] to the cultivations. We remained outside, and spoke to these people in the field, as can be seen from the photograph (Fig. 41), which I took at the conclusion of the interview.

In Table 34, in which the genealogy of the *Tsong-k'har-pa* (*bTsong-mK'har-pa*) household is given, it will be seen that the Bata household grew out of it in the following way. Döndrup's father, Tsong-gu Malik, now dead, was married to a woman called Sonam of the Bata household, one which was well-known in Leh. They had three children, all boys, of whom Döndrup was the youngest. With the elder brothers, P'hüntzok and Pe-leg, he married polyandrously a woman named Putit of P'ho-sang household. And with this common wife, the brothers had no less than twelve children, of whom six died and six survived.

[928] Döndrup's mother, Sonam, died after all her brothers, and no heirs remained for the Bata household from which she had come; none were even adopted it seemed. For this reason, after P'hüntzok and Pe-leg had taken over the *k'hang-chen* of the Tsong-k'har-pa house, Döndrup was made heir to the Bata household, that is the one of his mother. He went and lived there immediately, and the sons he had with his brothers' common wife, helped him to cultivate the land there.

[1197] The eldest of these boys, Ishe Paljor, together with his brother, Ishe
553 (now dead), then married a certain Moslem woman, who took the name Senghe Tsomo when she became Buddhist (as she should to marry
[591] Buddhists). These children then took over the *k'hang-chen*, and P'hüntzok and Pe-leg moved into the *k'hang-gu* at Tsong-k'har-pa. A third

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son, Murup, was, however, made Döndrup's heir at the Bata household, so that he came to join his youngest father there, without putting the latter in a *k'hang-gu*. Some time later, he married Palkid of Tarig, and continued to live with his father in the Bata *k'hang-chen*. This was some twenty four years ago, and in the meantime, Palkid not having any children, it was decided that a *porjag* should be called in. The reason for this was apparently not only because of the wife's sterility. As in the earlier case at Shing-k'hang-pa, I was told that Döndrup and Murup were insufficient to cultivate the land, and that another man was needed. Ishe Paljor of Shing-k'hang-pa household was thus called in four years before my visit, and duly married to Palkid as her extra husband. He was certainly a help in working the fields, but he in no way remedied the barrenness of Murup's wife. She told me that they were now thinking adopting an heir, but she could not say whom they had in mind at this early stage.

In the Tsong-k'har-pa household, I heard, there were now three *k'hang-gus:* one was that in which Putit, Döndrup's mother, lived (she was still alive); the other, the one in which Ishe Paljor and Sang-gyä Tsomo lived (Ishe, the younger brother had died after the polyandrous marriage); and the third was the quite paradoxical case of Deskid, the couple's daughter, who had rented one from her brother, Rigzin, who was now in possession of the *k'hang-chen* with his wife, Tsering of Shorepa, and their three children. On this rented portion, of which she was a tenant without occupation, she lived with a *mag-pa* whom she had taken to herself, a certain Tonyot of Azim-pa, and had one boy. Her share was considered as a split-off portion of the Tsong-k'har-pa household, and bore the name of Ralwa Tsong-k'har-pa, or "cleft Tsong-k'har-pa". Her son was apparently considered to be the heir to this new household, but how this was possible, considering the tenancy was of so precarious a nature, was not explained to me.

Rigzin and Deskid had a younger brother, Ngawang, who had, however, left the family before his elder brother married, and become a lama at Himis gompa. He was entitled to a share of the family property in accordance with Ladaki customary law, but for the time being was not claiming it, and lived together with his fellow-monks on the revenue of the monastery. He was also entitled to share his elder brother's wife with the latter, his order not being celibate, but it was not specified whether he did so or not.

Döndrup told us that of his other children, a daughter, now called Aisha, bore that name because she had married a Moslem Ladaki with whom she lived in Leh.

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one of them is married, or gets married later, it is agreed that the friends will also share the wife. When Don-chen-la died, Norgyäs was left alone with their common spouse, and he came to Ladak with her.

I asked the informant if he knew of cases of exchange of wives, in which married men had simply taken each other's wives, as I had heard of this before I visited Ladak, but had not been able to find any actual cases. He told me that this did happen, precisely between people who were *skyidug-chik-pa*. If they both married, they would exchange the women after some time, to show that they really did have everything in common, and then later revert back to those they originally had. Thus, he knew of a certain Changling Cholak and a *Dzong-pön* (*Dzong-dPon*) or magistrate, called Nichang(?), who were linked by such a "happiness-grief-identical" relation in Lhasa. They exchanged their wives in this manner, even after they had had children with them. The offspring did not, however, follow the mother, but remained with the father (presumably until the mother returned home again after some years).

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Norgyäs assured me, too, that wives were often offered to important guests when they visited a family, although the custom was declining. Joseph insisted that this did not exist in Ladak, and that he had never come across it there. Norgyäs, however, said that he knew of Ladaki cases of such hospitality too, and Joseph said that it must, then, be close to the Chang-t'hang borders. The bandit admitted that this was so, in the neighbourhood of lake Pang-kong, in the extreme east.

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2. *Polyandrous families at Kalatse and Mulbek*

On the 4th October 1938 at Kalatse, Joseph Gergan took me to a household named Gyamtso-pa, where there was a *porjag*, that is, where non-fraternal polyandry was practised. I made the genealogy of this family, and it is given in Table 35. The informant was Lha-dzom, a woman, about thirty five years old, with a lively manner, who seemed very pleased to give us all the details which we wished to learn from her. She and her two husbands, Tsering and Tsering P'hüntzok, together with her two children, Sonam Lhamo, a girl, and Kumchok Rabsang, a boy, lived in a *k'hang-chen*, while her first husband's father and mother lived in the *k'hang-gu*. Tsering's two sisters, who were older than him, had been married off in *bag-ma* to other households. The two children born to Tsering and Lha-dzom were as yet unmarried, although quite grown-up, and lived with their parents and their mother's second husband, Tsering P'hüntzok, the *porjag*.

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information that I wanted on the subject of fathers and sons sharing a wife in Kalatse.

Four days later, on the 8th October 1938, we were in Mulbek, the last village where people of Tibetan cultural affinity are to be found on the way westwards. Here, too, I discovered polyandrous families, and interviewed them through Joseph, but with some difficulty. It appeared that we had now reached a frontier area, one in which culture contact with non-polyandrous people existed and, as is usual in such a case, those practising polyandry were self-conscious about the custom and reluctant to speak about it to strangers. The first of two genealogies which I was able, nevertheless, to take down, is given in Table 36.

We went to this household, called Skya-pa, because a Moslem whom Joseph knew in the bazaar had told us that we would find a *porjag* in it. In the neighbourhood of the house we were, however, stopped by its inmates, who refused to let us approach it. They were a surly lot, the women wearing a sort of diminutive *perak* (*berag*) on their forehead and no woollen ears any longer, the men dressed in the usual Ladaki clothes. They seemed very reluctant even to speak to us, and Joseph had the greatest difficulty in getting anything out of them. They said that we could not go to the house because it was dirty, and only with the worst possible grace, condescended to speak to us where we stood, in the lane leading to their home.

A man called Tsering Chömpel was our informant. He told us that his parents, Tsering P'hüntzok his father, and Ngawang Rolma his mother, lived in the *k'hang-gu*, while he with his wife, their four children and his younger brother, Ishe, lived in the *k'hang-chen*. He told us, too, that his two sisters, Yangdzom and Tsering Rolma, were married out in *bag-ma* to other households, respectively to Tsering of T'hustön-pa household, and Chömpel of Tashi Gompa household.

Asked if these two households were polyandrous, he said no, that they were not. Pressed, he added that polyandry was not practised in Mulbek, and that he himself did not share his wife, Stanzin Kündzom, with Ishe. This was denied later by Joseph, who told me that from friends of his in Mulbek, he knew that polyandry existed there just as much as in the rest of Ladak, but that the people did not like to admit it, were shy to do so, and even somewhat ashamed. When I asked about the rumoured *porjag* said to exist there, needless to say, this was hotly denied. We were asked what our source of information was, which we naturally refused to divulge. Whereupon Tsering Chömpel said to Joseph that his family was being slandered.

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Stanzin Kündzom refused to speak during the whole interview. I tried to draw her out at the beginning, but she made it perfectly clear at once that she would only say something if I paid her then and there. Not wishing to do this for fear of setting a bad example and creating a precedent, we carried on with her husband who was somewhat more accommodating, and eventually gave him a monetary reward when we had finished, for which he expressed his thanks.

That same morning, Joseph and I went on to another polyandrous family of Mulbek, called *Yoktso-pa* (*gYog-Ts'hogs-pa*) (Table 37). These people, who appeared to be as poor and as suspicious of us as the others but were slightly more accommodating in that they did admit to being polyandrous, lived in a *k'hang-gu* in which there were two brothers married to one wife, and in a *k'hang-chen*, the inhabitants of which were the two sons of the former and their common wife, young people who had only recently been married and did not yet have any children.

Tsewang, the eldest of the older generation, acted as the informant, but his brother, Tsewang Paljor, and their common wife, Nordzom Rolma, assisted him greatly. These people told us that their parents, Paljor their father, and Skidzom their mother, had died some years ago, and that they were consequently occupying the *k'hang-gu* now themselves, since the marriage of their grown-up children. Their eldest sister, Tseten, was married away in *bag-ma* to three brothers in a household called Alea-pa, while the second sister, also elder to them, Chosang Rolma, was a nun. This woman was present at the interview, and we heard that she was normally resident at Himis gompa, but that she often came home on visits. She had no particular inclination to be a nun, it seemed, since she had been sent to the monastery by her parents when, as a child, she had nearly died, and they had made a vow that if she recovered, they would dedicate her to Himis.

The informant and his brother, together with their common wife, Nordzom Rolma, had had three children, two boys, Sonam Wangyal and Tsewang Tashi, and one daughter, born between these two, called Tashi Pal-mo. The latter was married off to Tashi Sonam of Ṣhak-pa Household, while the two boys had a wife in common, whom they had married recently. Her name was Tashi Kidzom, and they lived with her in the *k'hang-chen*, which they had just taken over. They had been married too short a time to have children yet, and that is all that the words "no issue" mean in the genealogical table.

It had not been too difficult here, to find out that these people were